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The Forty-Niners
and
Other Rhymes

Ansel Forree Wilcox

The Forty-Niners
and
Other Rhymes

Some slants on subjects
old and new without "Soarings
In the High Reason of Fancy."

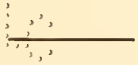
By

ANSON BRAZEE WILCOX

Poetry is music in words; and music is poetry in sound.
—Fuller

All are architects of fate,
Working in these halls of time;
Some with massive deed and great,
Some with ornaments of rhyme.
—H. W. Longfellow

If I can lend
A strong hand to the fallen, or defend
The right against a single envious strain,
My life, though bare
Of much that seemeth dear and fair
To us on earth, will not have been in vain.
—Helen Hunt Jackson



Orange Bower, California

Illinois State Register, Springfield.

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1922

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Respectfully Dedicated

to

Mr. and Mrs. Raymond A. Leonard.

To the Reader

Every book of whatever importance has a purpose and this one has several. It is the sincere hope that it will help to make the real California better known and induce those of far greater ability to lay aside their fears and endure whatever must be endured to give their part of our state a higher place on the poetic map.

The fate of Lavinsky, Redman and others, who quit life because they could no longer endure the persecution directed against them, has had its effect. It is natural to follow the lines of least resistance, particularly when to do otherwise may mean what it has meant. But the writer has felt it as a call to duty to do the little he could do to help those who are so valiantly striving to loosen the strangle hold of the lethal forces which are keeping a large part of our state from its rightful place in the line of progress; forces which would still hold it to the level of primitive days.

Another aim is explained by the sub-title. It is believed that the rhymes are understandable by all who understand the English language. Those who are looking for effusions which expatiate on the nebulosity of the imponderable will have to look elsewhere.

The little book was primarily meant for those encouraging friends who knew of the difficulties under which much of it was composed. It is now passed along to other friends of a wider circle with the hope that they may find it not unworthy of our sunny State. There is the further hope that the popular vein, appearing now and then, will not detract from sincerity but that the reader will find an hour's profit as well as pleasure in perusing its pages.

A. B. W.

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*THE FORTY-NINERS

Lest Memory should close her page
On days when gold held all the stage;
When the round world with single eye
Turned California-ward to try
Its luck; where fortunes could be won
'Tween glowing dawn and setting sun,
Or if not quite so swift as this,
The gold was here one could not miss—
I would record a line or two
Of deeds which should be kept in view.

Here by these streams and o'er these hills
They strode and toiled with sturdy wills,
These giants in a purpose strong,
These heroes with a conquering song;
They met the challenge of great souls
Of heat and drought, of storm and flood,
Of blistering trails, of swamping mud,
Of hunger, cold and roofless nights,
Yet paused not at such costly tolls.

Stern Nature seems to frown and wait
To yield her secrets to the great,
And here reluctant she gave way
To hearts of oak she could not stay;
Here in the struggle for his goal
Each bared the gold of a rugged soul;
Together they the Savage fought,
Together beast and bandit caught,
Renewed the fires of ancestral fame
To meet all dangers as they came;
If rough their games and songs and jokes,
They hid the heart-ache for the homeland folks.

And in this struggle in a land unknown,
Where death marked the card that called his own—
For here and there 'neath the yew and pine,
Where the striving winds through the chap'ral whine,
On many a lonely star-domed hill,
Lies all that is left of a heart long still—
What was, through all this hardship, won?
Was it the gold and the gold alone?
They won an empire which by God's grace
Shall live while liberty holds its place,
And proved that man's unfettered will
Cannot be conquered, will conquer still.

*(Note: This poem was first published in the Sacramento Union, May 26, 1922, when two hundred thousand people attended The Days of Forty-Nine Celebration.)

MY ORANGE BOWER

Fair is the spot where flows the stream of song,
Where Po-e-sy inspires a stam'ring tongue,
Where all the ambient airs in cadence breathe
And tuneful strains Time's gentle hours enwreath.

Nowhere beyond are skies so fair and blue,
None gemmed so full of smiles, the clouds so few;
And here I've found my Isle—Isle of the Blest,
Led by my star to end a happy quest.

Here bud and fruit the embowering orange trees—
The once famed apples of the Hesperides;
Small wonder Juno chose such wedding gift,
And Hesper's daughters kept from loss or theft.

The fragrance which sweet-scents this golden bower,
Not Irem had nor Yemen's dulcet flower;
It soothes dull care and woos till downy ease
Becomes a fond luxurious disease.

The bee strums strophes of melody and sips
Hymettan dew from blossoms' nectared lips;
The thronging songsters greet me as a guest
While building in the magic of a nest.

A fountain near diffuses summer's rays
And greens the grass with limpid circling sprays,
When fields are brown and all the mountain side,
And hazed the peaks where beats the ocean tide.

Here one may muse in spirit and discard
The fleshly link which binds to earth so hard,
And feel the beauties which heaven brings anear
For high enjoyment for all with soul to hear.

Not Homer here could trump of war and flame,
Nor Horace the Falernian cup acclaim;
No journey could great Chaucer lure away,
Nor Milton's fancy have greater chance for play.

Ne'er did I find in that far tropic zone*
The thermal balm I here may call my own;
The dawn's more fair, the day's reluctant close
Waves gorgeous banners to wish me sweet repose.

Here I may revel as one born out of time—
My harp but single-stringed yet strum its rhyme—
May glimpse the mighty who've graced the world of song,
A follower afar yet humbly to belong.

*The author spent a year in South America.

IN THE RICE FIELDS

Gay is the morning, O Rice Fields,
  Gay with the glow of green and yellow
Of your changing moire in the sunlight,
  Filtered through sea-born clouds, soft and mellow.

The fragrance which thurifies the breeze,
  Across your gold-laden ears of treasure,
Is sweet to the husbandman and sweet
  To me who feasts e'en now on coming pleasure.

Along your water-ways the wild fowl
  Revel noisily or, lazily napping,
Heed no more the call of the icy vasts
  Nor join the goose-wedge through clouds sky-wrapping.

Soon the reapers will nibble at your edges,
  Will unravel your web of rare beauty,
Leaving the skeins in tangled heaps
  But foraging your wealth—no richer booty.

Let me romp in you as in the tall grass
  And lave in you and feel your touch caressing;
Let me dream of you and the infinitude of stars
  While the frets and skeins of life go evanescing.

Let me thrill anew in the Infinite Wisdom,
  The fiatic mystery of time unbending;
The seed, the harvest; birth and rebirth of man and star,
  In days or aeons forever onward wending.

THE MYSTERY

By the river's flow'ry brink,
  Come with me at early dawn;
We will sit beneath the willow,
Or with pine boughs for a pillow,
  Rest serene on grassy lawn,
While the river's calm we drink.

Come when songsters, glad of life,
  Throat their sweetest roundelay;
Or with gleeful wings the water
Dash to spray 'mid birdish laughter,
  E're the palpitating day
Ushers in its round of strife.

We will watch the silver tide,
  Rippling music on its way;
Singing still its gladsome story,
On and on since ages hoary,
  Giving of itself each day,
Loving service far and wide.

While we listen to the strain,
  We the mystery shall know:
Why it is that constant duty
Changes sordidness to beauty;—
  Chilling ice and freezing snow
Thus become the balmy rain.

Then when comes the toilsome day,
  Burdened with its weight of care,
We shall fear its toils no longer,
Faith renewed and courage stronger,
  Gladly we will fardels bear,
Spreading cheer along the way.

THE SONG

Sometimes the orange bower fails—
  Inspires no song;
And closed are all the Pindus trails
  With thoughts that throng;
The arrow, that would reach the height,
Lacks centered impulse for the flight,
As many bows add not in might,
  Nor flight prolong.

Or many strings are to the bow,
  No shaft will suit;
No song to-day, nor high nor low,
  The pen lies mute;
Then comes the katydid to sing,
With pride he strums his single string,
To cheer the heart of everything
  He's resolute.

He glories in his helpful art,
  His note but one;
Of all earth's choirs he's apart
  With Mendelssohn;
'Tis not the many notes that sway,
Nor send the message on its way;
So there will be a song today
  E'er set of sun;

A song that may in humble guise
  Some courage bring;
Some note of brighter, fairer skies,
  With joys awing;
Though simple be the lay and plain,
It will not have been sung in vain
If 'twill inspire some heart again
  In hope to sing.

THE PUNGENT BUCKTHORN

When Lady March with velvet key
Has ope'd and set Earth's jewels free;
How pungent is the buckthorn's bloom!
To hold it all there scarce seems room.

The manzanita vainly tries
To spread its pearly chalices,
To add if may be fragrant worth
To all the vernal joys of earth.

Likewise the scented heliotrope
Would lend its aid with buoyant hope;
But of their wish they'll catch no gleam—
The pungent buckthorn reigns supreme.

ORANGE PICKING

When autumn winds from heated ways
  Sport with the rolling tumble weed;
And goldenrod from starry rays
  Lets fall to earth its ripened seed;
There comes a day all days among
  That turns life's prose to leaping rhyme;
It brings a shout from old and young
  When round comes orange picking time.

The wagons move with lively pace,
  The youngsters romp and dance with glee,
And all with knapsacks strapped in place
  Go through the orchard, tree to tree;
They climb among the bronze green leaves
  To pluck the luscious golden globes,
A gold some fairy interweaves,
  For never queen wore richer robes,

And when the sacks are brimming o'er,
They bear them down and boxes fill;
Then up again and pick some more,
For there are oceans of them still;
Tom eager calls to Sister Rhe,
For he has found some extra sweet,
He shares with her and both agree
There is no finer fruit to eat.

With care they fill the wagon bed,
Then all the children climb aboard;
They drive off to the packing shed
And there unload their precious hoard.
A merry crew—an orange bee—
Wraps each with softest paper round,
Packs boxes ready for some tree
Wherever Christmas trees are found.

When evening comes, they play at games,
One hears the banjo, tambourine;
Song follows song and each proclaims
The orange as the reigning queen.
Though other seasons have their joys,
And some would praise with noisy drums,
None suits so well the girls and boys
As this, when orange picking comes.

THE MOUNTAIN ROVER

I am roving the Sierras
  Through and through;
Peak on peak in joy ascending,
  View on view;
Climb where some aspiring dome
For the stars would make a home
So no longer they need roam
  As they do.

Canons here and there low falling,
  Deep on deep;
Cliffs so sheer the eye appalling,
  Steep on steep;
Where the world has set its rafter,
Let the voice but ring with laughter—
Peaks will join in ever after
  Till they sleep.

There's a maid* that's worth pursuing,
  Coy this maid;
None so faint but would be wooing,
  Shine or shade;
When her voice is heard a-rippling,
Thirsty souls just take to tippling,
Precious every drop and drippling—
  Earth's "First Aid."

Comes the day to glorious ending;
  Sun and sea
Kiss while blushing clouds are sending
  Love to me;
Coffee fragrant, trout a-frying,
Then on blankets spread I'm lying,
Rest comes sweet, there's no denying,
  Sweet and free.

Then Dawn's pollen, eyes a-filling,
  Rubbed away;
Eerie joys the soul a-thrilling,
  Come what may;

"Onward" trumps the call of morning,
With new life the sun's adorning,
Toil and care forever scorning,
Vast the day.

In my veins the peaks are bounding,
Part of me;
Bird and tree and cliff resounding,
Harmony;
Freedom's drumbeats here are playing,
Here God hears and answers praying,
Here my heart would e're be staying,
Mountain free.

*Water.

PREFERRED

I heard their boast far out at sea,
Those mighty towers of flame-lit steel;
And when I climbed them verily
It made my throbbing senses reel.

And bridges too of strength and flight,
Aladdin's lamp could not such wing,
Nor poise at such a thrilling height,
Sang their importance towering.

Huge dreadnaughts glowed and proud machines
That dived the deep or winged the air,
Bit holes through mountains, hid ravines
And tasks the old gods did not dare.

These and their cousins were so great—
The miracles of man's invention—
No rivals might their fame abate,
There could be none worthy of mention.

Then Love's soft laughter modestly
Drew near, came through my cottage gate;
Ah, then I cried, "Just stay with me,
Let all man's great inventions wait."

THE PINE-WIND SONG

There is no song like the pine-wind sings
  The sky-domed mountain tops along;
There is no fragrance like it brings
  To ease the pulses' throb and throng;
Here all my trails it knows by heart,
  Here all my wanderings come to rest,
And I forget the street and mart
  When of the pine-wind I'm a guest.

Here feeds the red deer, nose to wind,
  And here I too the red deer am,
As free from fetters that would bind,
  As free to feel the pine-wind balm;
Its fragrance deepens as it trips
  Across my bare and fevered brow,
Soft as the touch of maiden's lips,
  Sweet as the lisp of maiden's vow.

The age-old secrets that it brings
  Of desert, sea and icy vast,
E'er it 'gan here its whisperings,
  All o'er me a deep thralldom cast;
For it has winged e'er Time began,
  'Twill onward wing when Time's forgot;
Its song is Lethe's artisan
  Till I'm the pine-wind in this spot.

A WAYSIDE PINE

How dear that tree, that wayside pine,
  Whose branches wide like banners spread;
Whence bird-songs burst with notes divine,
  That round me hope and courage shed.

To all around it was a friend—
  To traveler wearied on the way
And plowboy, at the furrow's end,
  Found shelter from the sun's hot ray.

But best of all this truth it told:
  Who would life's ills to joys transform,
Must stand like worthy knight of old,
  'Mid hurtling thrust and thrash of storm.

And now 'tis gone, that grand old tree,
  A ruthless axman laid it low;
No more 'twill wave its cheer to me—
  Help me to bear the storms that blow.

MASTERS

Said great Aurelius, sage of old:
  "Your happiness depends,
Upon the kind and character,
  Of thoughts that shape your ends."

Oh, would this sage rise from his dust,
  And borrow Gabriel's horn;
To wake us from our own dead selves,
  Since Fate rules night and morn!

'Twould take a mighty blast, but then,
  We would be gainers still
To know they're Masters who depend
  On thoughts and force of will.

O-FU-KU

O-fu-ku, O-fu-ku,
Ah, how I do envy you!
More than emperor his throne,
Or great Budda carved in stone;
More than prince in splendor's rank,
Or Chosh-u who owns the bank;
More than Shogun's master word,
Of great Kublai with his sword;
O-fu-ku, O-fu-ku,
Ah, how I do envy you!

O-fu-ku, O-fu-ku,
Why do I so envy you?
This: Because where'er you stay,
You can demons drive away;
In a painting which I own,
Throwing beans, you there are shown,
Throwing them with all your might,
Driving demons from your sight;
Ah, if I but could do this,
Then my cup were filled with bliss!

O-fu-ku, O-fu-ku,
I no more will envy you,
If to me you'll give this power
In fee simple as a dower;
It may take up all my means
Just to buy the sacks of beans,
But I'll throw them hard and straight,
And these nuisances abate;
It will be well worth the price—
Make this life a Paradise.

O-fu-ku, O-fu-ku,
Surely that for me you'll do;
Ah, the demons that abound
In and out and all around!
Demon "lazy," demon "late,"
Demon "hurry," demon "wait,"
Demon "debt forgot to pay,"
Demon "talks my time away;"
O-fu-ku, O-fu-ku,
Ah, how I do envy you!

THE TEACHER

We've dreamers had whose dreams came true
  And all the world was helped thereby;
But e'en their failure brought to view
  Some latent possibility;
There's one whose wagon trails a star,
To her my lays indited are.

She sees within each little flame,
  That stands up-smiling at her knee,
The fire that will emblaze a name
  To honor all humanity;
And though herself may be forgot,
She fans the flame, it matters not.

No sculptor clearer image sees
  Within the marble's darksome shade;
No brush can limn such qualities—
  Immortal attributes God made;
Hers the alchemist's touch to fuse
All blemishes to beauty's hues.

She bears the Lamp where learning goes,
  Between all seas where free hearts dwell;
'Tis she who Patriotism sows—
  With Loyalty makes all hearts swell;
Though such her aims, so soft her tread,
We leave the praiseful word unsaid.

In city's heart, on wind-swept plain,
  On mountain height or far-flung vale;
In cold or heat, in shine or rain,
  Discouragements in vain assail;
The highest call which humans hear
Makes patient duty one of cheer.

To her away what memories run!
  What sweet aromas round her cling,
Who guided when we first begun
  To answer learning's beckoning!
To syllable taught me the art,
Enshrined herself within my heart!

Friends, when the throng the air has rent
With cheers and cannon's loud applause,
To throne some great one President,
Think who of greatness is the cause;
Who oft unsung, unheard, unknown,
Is yet the nation's corner-stone.

JOHN BURROUGHS

Where'er he walked, companion of the trails,
Through fields or woods, along the verdant dales,
He found fair kindred of the furred and feathered wild,
And knew their homelife as a father knows his child.

Where'er he walked, there came an eager throng,
Like children followed Pied, lured by his song;
These caught his vision—all creatures had new charm—
And learned 'twas nobler to do them naught of harm.

Where'er he walked, fair Nature brighter shone
And millions saw; they loved him as their own;
A deeper sympathy in widening circles ran
Till all the knowing earth rejoiced for such a man.

Where'er he walked, his voice is missed today,
None other so endowed to lead the mystic way;
But we have memories more precious far than gold,
And visions that will gladden while time itself shall hold.

John Burroughs, Naturalist; b. April 3, 1837; d. March 29, 1921.

HE CALLED THEM GOOD

When you have climbed Sierra's heights,
And felt with me their kingly sway;
Have seen them clothed in ember lights
Like streams of gold at close of day;
Have gazed across the valley's span
And of vast spaces caught the mood,
You'll understand—a sentient man—
How, when He'd made, God called them good.

When you the trampling surf have heard
Aboom in grand cathedral tones,
Upon the sturdy cliffs that guard—
Their sentinel the Farallones;
Have seen the Day King slow descend
Into Pacific's crimson flood
To gild the day with glorious end,
You'll understand; God called them good.

When you have walked 'neath yew and pine
And mused where great sequoias reign;
Bowed at Yosemite's steep shrine
As pilgrim at some pillard fane;
Seen wood and stream with life abound,
The fat globe bearing luscious food
Where man may feast the seasons round;
You'll understand; God called them good.

When you have felt the thrill of bloom,
The foothills swathed in cloth-of-gold;
The soothing helitrope's perfume,
The dreams that fill the twilight wold;
Have caught the vision, calm, serene,
Of His intent, its pulchritude—
A foretaste of His realm unseen,—
You'll understand; God called them good.

THE HILLS THAT CHARM

They hold me still with a charm most tender,
The hills that dimple and bid me stay;
They dress so comely in emerald splendor
Or brown, starred with poppies, up all the way;
And when I am tempted afar to wander,
I hear a whisper and my bosom thrills—
They call me back from away off yonder,
Do my hills, my California hills.

Oft I have listened to the Tempter's wooing,
And followed her north, south, east and west,
Beguiled by her into pursuing
Some other Eschol that was best;
I sought in climes by fame most golden
Plucked fruits by other crystal rills;
But naught could appease my heartlove olden
For my hills, my California hills.

Oh, I love the soil where the clover quickens,
Where the fig invites and the grape endears;
Where the fields wave gold and abundance thickens,
And age is endowed with youthful years;
I love th' green bay and th' round red berry,
The raisin and orange to feast as one wills;
The song-birds join in a chorus merry
For my hills, my California hills.

The vales and uplands are so bonny,
The kine and the flocks browse in pastures deep;
The quail pipes his lay, the bees mint honey,
And fish in the streams for gladness leap;
The breeze blows soft with a breath of the ocean,
That valor inspires and virtue instills;
There's nought calls forth my deepest devotion
Like my hills, my California hills.

Here dwell the sons, the true of all nations,
Who came by the light of a far-gleaming star;
To find in life's round untold jubilations
Mid the fatness of earth, where men as kings are;

Of gold there is plenty, but fairer the daughters,
Fair in that wisdom which gladdens and thrills;
They swell the delights, like Hymettan waters,
Of my hills, my California hills.

Yes, they hold me still with a charm most tender,
The hills that dimple and bid me stay;
They dress so comely in emerald splendor
Or brown starred with poppies, up all the way;
No more shall the Tempter entice me to wander,
Content is my heart and with nature o'erspills;
For here with the passing of days I grow fonder
Of my hills, my California hills.

SONG

Oh, the fragrant violet!
I adore it!
I adore it!
Springing where the fairies meet,
By a brooklet crooning down,
O'er the rocks so worn and brown,
To the sunny foothill town;
One could here almost forget
All things save the violet.
I adore it,
I adore it,
I adore the violet.

"Why adore the violet,
In such measure,
With such pleasure?"
Oft I, when the sun is set,
Weave a garland for her hair—
Crown for maiden wondrous fair,
Which she coyly deigns to wear,
Token of love's coronet.
(Ah, how sweet the violet!)
This the pleasure,
Why the measure,
I adore the violet.

THE ORANGE TREE

Of trees, like books, there is no end,
  Yet each his choice may praise;
Therefore I for the orange speak—
  For it my voice I'd raise.

Its yellow globes like nuggets hang
  'Mid leaves of green and bronze;
And drooping hang so all may reach
  Its ripest, sweetest, ones.

On days, when sweltering is the heat
  And sun-rays do their worst,
I hie me to an orange tree
  And pluck and slake my thirst.

How sweet the pulp to parched lips
  Or hunger's keen desire!
And then I sit beneath its boughs
  And its cool shade admire—

Admire the tree and call it best
  In all God's spacious plan;
Its fruit and leaves with beauty crowned
  A jeweled gift to man.

A GLIMPSE

She sat with a sister woman on a park bench;
Her face wore the bitterness of a thousand damned souls,
And she spoke red insults to passersby.

The silk of her was no longer even fustian;
Youth despoiled, God's mirror of beauty gone,
She was a sore, a fester on the name of woman.

This was in sight of the Dewey monument,
This was where the mighty of earth had marched,
This was where great wealth was heaped up in great heaps.

She was poor beyond nakedness,
She was poor beyond wanting a dry crust,
She was poor to wanting a soul!

Shameless she sat exhaling the fumes of rum and ruin;
I saw this question in a newspaper: Is there a Hell?
Oh, brother, sister, it is right here!

OLD OCEAN

Vast Tumult, thou, lap'd on a space-flung earth;
Thy seething trouble casts more witching thrall
Than red alembics of auroral birth,
Or Vulcan's flame or smoking meteor's fall.

'Gainst thee, how weak is man!—who span thy power
When the wild tempest rides to furious goal?
Man's ships caress thy bosom—one fell hour
And thou couldst sink to bysmal depths his every soul.

Symbol of Might! Beside thy crested wave
A speck upon creation's face I stand;
Across the centuries thou hast rolled to lave
These rocks by fiat of Creative Hand.

For greater far than thou as thou to man,
There reigns a power untroubled and benign;
'Tis Mind Eternal, enthroned e'er time began,
Holds me of worth beyond such might as thine.

VOYAGES

Oft I have sat anear the sunset sea,
Apart from the mad strife of gainful men;
Where mountains rose and zephyrs from the lea
Touched soft the brow till earth seemed young again.

Here Nature smiled through flower and bird's glad song,
Through crystal springs, sweet gurgling from the snows;
The sky bedecked with bannered cloud-steeds hung
In all the varied colors of the rose.

Ah! how I joyed in all her cosmic grace:
The sea, deep-nested in the lap of earth;
The bay, fair moulded into gracious space,
Where world fleets joined could find a harbored berth.

Oft I have watched the ships, like swans for ease,
Leave harbor nest, glide out the Golden Gate,
Eager as lovers to greet the whitened seas
And kiss as those long-parted when they meet.

Some were o'erweathered with sea-faring age—
The rusty sails, dull tackle, boats and oars—
Like Golden Hinds with a past equipage,
And Drakes newventuring to primal shores.

Some were new fabriced and still proudly bore
The christening garlands of a recent day;
Both old and new were seeking some far shore,
Some port of Ind, perhaps of far Cathay.

They followed down, companions of the sun,
But would return when finished was their quest
Full and rich laden; and, the voyage done,
Would nest again here of all ports the best.

And I, still musing midst the poppy's bloom,
Saw ships come home or go on voyage bent,
Until the wild sweet heliotrope's perfume
Lulled me to voyage in dream's Orient.

THE OLD SHIP SPEAKS

Once more the rhythmic pulse I feel
  Of surging brine against my prow;
Once more there thrills from mast to keel
  The joy of life as when my vow
I made as bride-to-be and true
And slid the ways to the arms of blue.

Proud was I then with the pride of youth,
  The cheers of a hearty throng were mine;
Fine fabriced too; I was, in truth,
  The finest ship of the Clipper line;
And on my decks a happy crew
Of the jolliest tars a ship e'er knew.

How proud they were, when all sails set,
  They watched me cut the scudding brine!
At eighteen knots, the tops'ls wet
  From dipping rollers across the Line
For Rio bound or Calao,
Or distant port where the spices grow.

I knew old Briny's every path,
  From Oregon to Bombay town;
Knew where the stormking whets his wrath,
  And simoons often send ships down;
But the sailors always swore by me,
For I took them home through the wildest sea.

They sailed me into every port—
  What joy to be a trusted ship—
Where peoples were of every sort,
  And fruits and sweets for every lip;
"Then heave ho! lads, we're homeward bound,
Once more we've been the world around."

What times those were! too fine to last;
  There came a change, I scarce knew how;
But ships ran faster or as fast
  By mystic smoke with puff and blow;
No mast was there upon the deck,
Of sails, I swear, there was not a speck.

Meanwhile I chafed my anchor chain,
  And chafed my spirit to the core;
I longed to hear the song again
  Of happy tars as we left the shore;
But years I there discarded lay
As just a ship that had seen its day.

Then conflict came of martial men
  Till nations made tumultuous war;
And ships were needed once again,
  E'en sailing ships as clippers are,
To weave the woof and meet demand
Of commerce with war's distant strand.

I was rerigged to plow the brine
  And stood forth burnished bright as new;
The skipper cried "Cast off that line,"
  I felt the tread of a jolly crew;
With food a cargo for starving souls;
Ah! sweet to feel how old Briny rolls.

They say beware of the sub-marine,
  Of hidden mine or bombing plane;
Of the far-flung shell or reef unseen,
  Since a thousand ships lie sunk i' the main;
But what care I for dangers rife!
For this is life, is life, IS LIFE!

Once more the rhythmic pulse I feel
  Of surging brine against my prow;
Once more there thrills from mast to keel
  The joy of life, as when my vow
I made as bride-to-be and true,
And slid the ways to the arms of blue.

THAT SPOT IS HOME

That spot is home wherein the heart
  Finds fullest share of happiness;
All otherwhere it roams apart,
  Oppressed by sordid loneliness.

'Tis lonely e'en 'mid crowded throngs—
  It shrinks as in a Titan's clutch,
And for that recognition longs
  Which sooths it with a kindred touch.

Though wealth and pomp and pleasure tread
  In robes of ermine and of gold,
It in the desert dwells instead,
  Or on some Alpine summit cold.

Then whether rich or poor my lot
  Or howsofar compelled to roam;
I'll seek to find that quiet spot,
  Wherein content my heart's at home.

OLD BEN

Old Ben the boisterous,
  On his lips a snarl;
Seeking for a quarrel with us,
  Curses he must hurl;
Rum has warped his countenance,
  Warped his temper too;
Thus goes Ben the boisterous,
  Vile and base to view.

Old Ben the boisterous,
  Lips from snarls set free,
Seeks no more to fuss with us,
  Has tranquility;
Death nobility has stamped
  On his furrowed brow;
And of Ben the boisterous,
  All is sacred now.

TO A SEA-GULL

You were so much a thing of mist,
You were so much a creature ethereal!
Sometimes so uncanny in your daring
That earth, sea and air seemed unreal,
All life was but enchantment.

Fierce winds across the heads but gave you pleasure,
White tempests that turned the sea to mountains,
That sent vast cargoes upon the furious rocks,
And thousands on the voyage of eternity,
Were to you, thing of spirit, but heaps of joy.

You were so intimate with the flying spume,
The splitting rock, the appalling cliff;
You were so close in touch with the crushing wave,
The terrifying, engulfing deep;
I believed you were invulnerable—
The spirit of Hephaestus come again.

You had become the brother of Death
And Death not dark but merry-lipped;
I could not believe the dank, black thing below
Advancing, receding, showing its hungry white teeth
Was waiting for a victim, was waiting for you.

Very real was boyhood's concept of death,
Very real but memory of it had paled;
Consciousness of it had grown dim;
I feared it no longer, helped on by you,
At most a mirage to be avoided by daring.

Now at sight of you how my high hopes fall,
You who played the game so bravely!
Unconsciously I had built up hopes,
Built up, helped on by you, that death was not,
At least was not for you and me.

Your folded wings bespeak the inevitable.
And now by every wind that cuts the wave,
By every wave that smites the rock,
By every storm that churns the deep,
May I play the game no less bravely.

NOW COURAGE HEART

Now, courage, Heart! stand true and fast,
  Surmount obstructing steeps;
Though storms affright, they cannot last
  To him who vigil keeps;
When fears beset they may undo,
Unless thou keep the goal in view.

Toil on and thou shalt surely come
  To restful heights 'neath azure skies;
And have reward through all life's sum
  Which comes to him who truly tries;
New light will come as thou ascendest,
If faith and hope with courage blendest.

WAITING

I saw the patient sea,
Beautiful in its movements;
In a lone place I saw it,
Where the fog reigns perpetually,
Shutting out the brightness,
Shutting out the love-warmth,
Shutting out the stars;
It never sees the celestial world,
Yet its mirror is turned upward,
Polished and ready—
    Waiting, waiting.

In an obscure canon,
Far from human habitation,
Are banks of flowers.
They have the turquoise of the sky,
The warmth of the lava,
The flame of sunset gold;

There is symmetry,
There is fragrance,
There is beauty,
But no eyes to see, to admire—
Waiting, waiting.

I have seen an aged widow
Facing bravely on;
Struggling with the care of others,
Struggling against penury,
Struggling with the burdens that are,
Fighting against loneliness,
Dreading the night, the day,
Craving release from toil,
Praying Heaven for help —
Waiting, waiting.

Life and the heart-cry—
Crying for fulfillment,
Crying for perfection,
Crying for continunity,
Longing for the spiritual,
Longing for the dream-life,
Longing for the ideal
I shall sing of the music, the welcoming,
Till this half-world opens to its fellow,
Singing helpfully, working cheerfully—
Waiting, waiting.

THE ORANGE TREE SPEAKS

To the orange tree I said:
"Listen, Orange, listen;
Why do you your blossoms spread
Creamy white to glisten?
When they'll but so briefly stay,
Then to earth and fade away,
With all else that must decay—
Death they do it christen.

"Why give pain to primal dust
With your agitation?
When your beauty soon will rust,
Pass to desolation;
Why should you the sun inveigh,
Shower of spring and summer day,
Struggling ever 'gainst decay,
What's the consolation?"

Then the orange made reply:
"This, sir, is the reason:
They leave promise e'er they die
To give fruit in season;
Fruit makes glad the heart of man,
Adding pleasure to life's span.
None with such abundance can
Give himself to treason."

"Granted this, but still I claim
Fruit, too, passes quickly;
And if this be all your aim,
Then your reason's sickly;
Why excite the humble dust?
Birth-throes surely are unjust,
Fail your every promise must,
E'en though showered thickly."

Frankly, then, replied the tree,
Smiling but denying:
"Birth-throes set the dust aglee.
'Tis the Plan applying;

Tree and flower and fruited mirth,
Prince and peasant who tread the earth,
Owe to dust the gift of birth—
  There's no need of sighing.

Beauty and passion now astir
  Join in this excelling;
Dust and flame with love as spur,
  Earth with life, are swelling;
Though to dust all must return,
Each shall live again and yearn
Still to live—they death will spurn—
  Life is so impelling."

PEARY

(Discovered the North Pole, April 6, 1909)

With heart of oak that feared not Tethy's ire,
  He steered his bark into the icy vasts—
A Wainamoinen daring to aspire
  To mighty conquest 'midst northland blasts.

Not his the fear of dread Plutonian caves,
  Where storied monsters greedily await;
Nor hungry maelstrom on whose gyring waves
  The mariner is hurled to an awful fate.

Nor yet chill Boreas whose whited breath
  Turns seas to glass, congeals the heart's red blood;
Nor lethal chasms—one step to icy death—
  Nor Titan hills of cold obstruction's flood.

He braved the battlements of reigning Night,
  When Phoebus turned his jealous smile away;
E'en Ashtoreth, with all her jeweled might,
  Waxed dim or fled with Dawn and fickle Day.

The doom of Franklin and our own Delong,
  True Knights of Conquest, did not him appall;
His life's fell purpose 'gainst Terror's throng,
  Was set to conquer this terrestrial ball.

Though Valkyrs with swift steeds and flaming spears
Made choice of one to hear Valhalla's call,
He faltered not but calmed all rising fears
By faith in One who hears the sparrow's fall.

Thus strongly armed, this doughty Argonaut
Slew the fierce Minataur of icy space;
Brought back the prize for which long years he sought,
With honor to his flag and to his race.

To him we grant the laurel wreath and crown,
Nor wait the pall to give him tardy praise;
Achievement his, unequaled in renown,
To him this day the victor's paean raise.

April, 1911.

WHISPERS

(East of Chicago)

Wigwams dotting the levels and the hills,
Emerald chains with tawny gold pendants round about,
Smoke and haze pervading from some giant breathing,
Airplanes honking and arrowing;

Choice fruit of early parents in huge heaps,
Wheels turning, boys with straws sucking joyously,
Woodchuck burrowing deep in hillside,
Muskrat laying in a big supply for a long rest;

Messengers hurrying from wigwam to wigwam,
They bear an open secret but whisper it,
You have but to listen to hear them whisper it;
It is a wonderful message!

THE AFTERMATH

Time moves along as on the winds that blow,
While restless hearts groan in their discontent,
And speech with loud complaints is often blent;
The world has changed, they say, and this we know,
Yet rarely reason why this change is so.
Our usual patience oft is mostly spent,
Because things cost, like the high cost of rent.
If we'd recall, in searching cause of woe,
Those emperors of time, Effect and Cause,
Since the world's orgy in the fields of wrath,
The reason for the change would be quite plain,
For these hold sway by inexorable laws—
Compel us now to bear the aftermath—
There's no escape, the wish is all in vain.

This heritage of cause is hard to bear,
And by lax ways we've tried full hard to see
If from all laws we might not be set free,
But find these laws are laws which no man spare,
Nor spare aught else existing anywhere.
We've tried the gangster rule, would gangsters be
Of race or clan as in antiquity;
Sunk man below his clan until his share
Of freedom was that of a puppet man;
Now we are going back, believing in the law,
Not that of race or clan, but that our fathers founded;
We're a brotherhood of brothers, wondrous plan,
By Heaven's will, the best the world e'er saw,
Each man a MAN, faith in his fellowman unbounded.

MY CALIFORNIA STATE

With feel of soft winds blowing,
And pleasures stealing, growing,
My car glides on through California State,
Across the landscape level,
From heights where snowbanks revel,
A-dipping down to greet the Golden Gate.

I pass the grainfields golden,
Like Scripture story olden,
Where Ruth might glean and find wealth manifold;
Through orchards orange-fruited
And vineyards to me suited,
Or mines where they wash out the yellow gold.

Then on to trees appalling,
To canons speech forestalling,
And waterfalls that mist in space away;
The trout from rivers leaping,
With hook and line tryst keeping,
Ah, here forevermore I want to stay.

But on my car keeps going,
While in my heart is flowing
A song that cannot thwarted be by fate;
And with it is the feeling,
As sunset joys come stealing,
This is my own, my California State.

AT CYPRESS POINT

Time's sturdy tools of storm and shine
  A harp have fashioned here;
Each cycle carved some scroll or line,
Attuned some note to cord divine,
Upon the cypress tree *design
  For music soft and clear.

Here comes King Aeolus to string
  His melody of song;
Here Poisodon joins chorusing,
Their sounding voices upward wing,
Uniting with the spheres that sing—
  Their mutual strains prolong.

Anon the many-footed rain
  Falls with soft-pedaled grace;
Or silvery mists subdue the strain,
While homing wings add their refrain,
E'er comes the surging hurricane,
  A-boom with thundering base.

Here one may muse at close of day
  When Phoebus rests his car;
May glimpse the centuries at play;
They carve a lyric, pipe a lay,
Or light a dyptytch with a ray,
  Then haste to scenes afar.

Man, like the cypress tree, must hold
  To life's rock-seamed span;
Upon him passion's strains unfold,
Play light and soft, play harsh and bold,
That he may all his nature mold
  Into the master man.

(*At last, accounts this tree was still clinging to the barren rocks in spite of the thrashing tempests and the scorchings of blistering suns. Its body is gnarled and dwarfed, yet it persists in keeping this arid, inhospitable spot green.)

HONEY-THOUGHTS

When I cut honey from the comb
Inwoven by a busy loom,
And eat it with some bread and butter,
Then thoughts just throng which I must utter.

I feel the urge of Israel's lure
The milk and honey to secure,
And reach, though footsore, Canaan's strand,
Where such abundance filled the land.

I hear the riddle known age-long;
Sweeter than sweet or lion strong,
Which Sampson gave but told and then
No stronger was than other men.

I eat and taste the joys of wing—
Delights of outward journeying,
Across green fields to flowery meads,
Where industry on nectar feeds.

The gleaners stand in wells tail-deep,
While yellow pollen wealth they reap;
Or pass, the clover to them bowing,
As though to royalty kotowing.

The songs of work are in the air
But none more fine than this I share;
The homeward flight with fragrant store
To garner it, then off once more.

I hear the chant of the early dawn,
The magic that bids the night be gone,
The day's full hum till twilight's peace
Gives tired wings well earned release.

I find that order is the law,
Hive harmony is without flaw;
That work's another term for faith
And loyalty's as strong as death.

This is the lesson that I learn,
That gives life charm at every turn;
To fill my place with faithful zest,
Then of all wealth I'll have the best.

WAVES

Down to the shore I've been, Love,
  Down to the sea;
I watched each wave as it came in,
  Watched it with glee;
I said: "I love you every one,
I like to see you rolling on,
Because, once in the days agone,
  You favored me."

"How could they favor you, Dear,
  Rough, wild their sway?
Thus: In a far, far land,
  Where strange maids stay,
I, homesick, for you cried,
Each wave helped wind and tide,
Till I stood by your side,
  No more to stray.

THE POOR AMERICAN

Come, gentle Waves and whisp'ring Winds
And hear this my complaint:
For I was born here in this land
In Freedom's unrestraint;
Here everybody has his friends,
His race or fighting clan,
But me—I am so lonesome here,
Just an American.

There's Fritz, a true and jolly sport,
They cannot keep him down;
He was a little weak in war,
But now wears ne'er a frown;
For he owns all the land, it seems,
Or rules it to a man,
While I—I must my silence keep,
I'm an American.

And there is Pat, wise in his years,
Knew where to be well born;
But didn't stay, he came away
For room to blow his horn;
And everybody speaks for him,
"Down trodden is his clan,"
While I—I am so lonesome here,
Just an American.

The Johnnies and Canucks are here,
Come from a better shore,
But stay because while here they may
Speak louder than before;
And go about like mighty lords,
I'm glad all comers can;
But I—I must my silence keep,
I'm an American.

The pale-haired Swede, the Parley-Voo,
The Dago, Jap and Dane,
The Vix-o-vokx and the Vox-o-Vikx
Are here and will remain;
They're in the lead, head the parade
With chests bulged out a span,
While I—I am so lonesome here,
I'm an American.

Just once I felt a thrill of joy;
They wanted men who'd fight;
And make Democracy secure,
For aye men's highest right;
But when I came back home again
My every word they'd scan,
And silence now I have to keep—
I'm an American.

Oh, Waves and Sympathizing Winds;
Would I'd been born elsewhere,
In Borriogoola Gha or Yap,
In Fizzum or Bzoghzxair;
For then I might be reckoned in,
Perhaps be called a man;
I'd not be then so lonesome quite
As an American.

THE FLIGHT

The air-ship climbed the vaulted height,
  The flier's fears protesting;
Each circle on the ambient air,
Rose higher as on Babel's stair,
Save here confusion found no share,
  The course or speed arresting.

At last the craft triumphant bore
  Him 'gainst opposing forces;
Among the stars so big and round,
And silences sweet as profound,
He wished no more to see the ground,
  But float in starry courses.

And so time's ship bears us along,
  Unto the silent spaces;
We aviators dread the flight,
But once arrived and all is bright,
No more we'll wish e'en for a sight,
  Of earth or mortal places.

THE RIVER'S TORRENT

Thou art a symbol of abounding life,
  Lusty and eager in thy onward course;
Gaily song-brooding and with incense rife
  Thou wend'st with rhythmic cadence from thy source.

Symbol again of death, thy sullen power,
  Resistless, as the law of change, thy way;
Thou sweep'st aside like playthings of an hour
  Obstruction's labored bulwarks 'gainst thy sway.

THERE ARE NOBLER THINGS

I know a peace-topped mount I call "Heartsease,"
For situation nature made wise choice;
There e'en in heated summer blows a breeze,
And birds make glad the day with sylvan voice.

There first the manzanita opes its bloom
And fills its chalices with dewy store;
There round the flowery buckthorn bees resume
Their eager task to garner sweets once more.

A gurgling rill from higher ground trips down
'Neath the madrona and the darksome yew;
A dimpled fringe of cress in emerald gown
Mid fern-clad rocks enchants the fairy view.

There pastures grow for the industrious kine,
Which climb the rugged trails to this retreat;
And, having fed, beneath the trees recline
To chew contentment's cud well-earned and sweet.

There oft I climb when weary of the strife,
To hear the tinkling bells of sweet content;
'Tis there I find rejuvenation's fife
Woos back life's best, its crowning blandishment.

I find surcease from fell ambition's sway—
No urge to wealth nor fame's exalted goal;
And Heav'n bends near and whispers low to say:
"There're nobler things to satisfy the soul."

THADDEUS KEARNS

"Why do men sigh and women weep?"
"Oh! stranger, this is why:
The Reaper has been here to reap—
Took one we so much wished to keep;
Called him to enter his long sleep,
Who was o'er young to die.

His name was Kearns, you'll want to know,
We mostly called him Thad;
He was the bravest lad to go,
Where danger lurked by tests to show
How science could o'ercome a foe,
That progress might be had.

Although so young, with earnest care
He toiled at his machine;
Until, by skill and genius rare,
He could with it fly anywhere,
Upon the coy and mystic air,
The earth and sky between.

And when success his efforts crown'd,
As they deserved to be;
He like an eagle left the ground,
Winged high his flight and round and round—
With cheers the echoes did resound,
It was a sight to see.

Achievement's pride was in the face
Of our ambitious Thad;
Though as he flew from place to place,
His thoughts were of the human race—
Hoped better things would come apace,
Through him to make them glad.

He was so gentle, true and kind,
Courageous from his birth;
But valor nor fine traits of mind,
Could save him when a wing declined
To serve its purpose as designed,
And all crashed to the earth.

A dreadful moment filled with pain,
To see our brave boy fall!
He gave his life yet not in vain;
He'd surely give it o'er again,
If a perfected aeroplane,
He could provide for all.

And so men sigh and maidens weep,
For hero Thaddeus Kearns;
Through times to sow and times to reap,
His name they'll ever sacred keep;
And though he yonder lies asleep,
The heart still for him yearns."

FINDING LIFE'S GOLD

Day after day, week after toilsome week,
I heard the miner's thudding pick and drill;
Begrimed he was with toil and sweat and mud,
Yet daily grew the tunnel by his will—
Grew as he breasted down the stubborn clay
And wheeled it out and cast it down the slope,
Pausing betimes to take a moment's rest,
Then on again with never failing hope.

"Why work so hard," I asked, "and spend your means,
When not a grain of gold have you yet found?"
"Oh, sir, the gold is there, God put it there,
And I shall find it when I reach gold-bearing ground."

To have the miner's faith has been my prayer,
When come, as will, the days of doubt and dearth;
To have clear vision—no figs on thistles grow—
These joined with work will find the gold of earth.

TO MISTER GEORGE STERLING

Fill up, fill up, once more, the cup,
  When sparkling flows the wine;
And give us each another sup
  Of fancy such as thine.

Watch once again that ruddy glow,
  Muse at that shrine so rich,
Where wizardry is wont to show
  The things that so bewitch.

Call maidens forth and ardent souls,
  By divination seen;
Then wottled monsters, bloody ghouls,
  With hungry growl and mien.

Bid Hecate lift her cowl once more,
  Let Circe poisons spread;
While Satan holds one flayed and sore
  Whose shrieks but pleasure shed.

Take us to fell Tartarian fires,
  Undominate of men;
Appease once more our deep desires
  By magic of thy pen.

THE CHAIN OF SILENCE

In days agone, when Time was passing young
And Thought still fluttered on its fledgling wings;
E're Memory had writ on scroll outflung,
And Aeolus alone tuned vocal strings;
There were in ancient Erin mystic bards
Who caught their rhythmic notes upon the wind
And sang their lays so soft that merest shards
Alone are left to the enquiring mind.

The gist and burden of that ancient lay
Howe'er engossamered in silky myth,
Yet holds a pregnant message for today—
A dole of wisdom 'tis if not the pith;
Yet ye shall judge and here the substance know,
As it has ambled down the trails of time,
In mystic symbols of the long ago,
In runic, Gaelic and Druidic rhyme.

In those rude days, when brutal war held reign,
And men were bound in tribes to live or fall,
Chanced hordes of Finns and Gauls to sail the main
To the Green Isle; its beauty cast its thrall
Till each to win it sought in deadly fight;
Sometimes the Finns, sometimes the Gauls won out,
And still they fought, so dear the prize in sight,
Yet neither could the other put to route.

At length, when most were wearied, weak and sore,
And dank the field lay covered with the slain,
The rank-and-file hard-wished the conflict o'er,
When suddenly came winging by a chain!
All knew the gods "The Chain of Silence" sent
And sprang to grasp nor would their hold release,
But shook from it such tones with magic blent,
That Finn and Gaul forever dwelt in peace.

OUR LOVE SHALL LIVE

The day is near its close,
  Dear, come with me,
And let us seek repose
  Beneath the orange tree,
While ling'ring day still shows
  The homing bird and bee.

Past be the chafing day
  With all its care;
All shall be shut away,
  Nor steal back unaware,
That undisturbed we may
  Our-heart-thoughts share.

Ah! now the mountains seem
  In closer brotherhood;
The river's silent gleam
  Speaks only gratitude,
And all the valley's dream
  Is wreathed in plenitude.

The roundelay of time
  Runs sweetly on;
Celestial chant and chime,
  In soothing carillon,
Breathe out angelic rhyme
  Beyond comparison.

Ne'er was the world so full
  Of sentient gold;
Nor wine of richer mull,
  However old;
Nor fragrance wonderful
  Ne'er to be told.

The city with its fame
  Of pick and pan,
Still shines with lustrous name
  And may again
As when far-faring came
  Wealth-seeking man.

A wealth we have more rare
  Than what they sought;
No more was sun or air
  By gold e'er bought,
It lightens every care
  Just as it ought.

This we will keep for aye—
  Will you and I;
The ills that fret and fray
  Shall pass it by;
And though all else decay,
  This shall not die.

SEA ROCKS

(To .....)

I saw sea rocks with green grass growing,
Clinging in spite of thrust and thrash of storm;
I saw mountain lava nourishing bright flowers,
Bright although all soil seemed washed away.

Life's thrash and storm, its lava's harshness, yes;
But sparkling above them and through them is your love,
Brighter than green moss, fairer than springing flowers;
And memories of you are far more sweetly fragrant.

SWEET MADNESS

There is sweet madness in the air,
In surge of life and buyant hope;
It thrills the breeze, the dawn's more fair,
And every joy is bursting ope.

With panting breath, the Southwind comes,
Its vagrant footsteps sounding near;
The crested quail the signal drums,
And Earth is glad for Spring is here.

With regal smile, she takes command,
Drives off the gaoled, old and gray;
Sets free her jewels—key in hand,
To robe earth gayest of the gay.

With swiftest pace and velvet tread,
She stirs to rapture vale and crest;
Persuades all creatures now to wed,
For of all seasons this is best.

Each bud is touched with lover's kiss,
Each bursting flower with passion's flame;
They radiate their store of bliss,
In honor of the reigning dame.

The orange and the olive glow,
New verdure crowns with festive green;
And in their veins new nectars flow,
To thurify their snowy sheen.

The Feather speeds, with banks a-flush,
To join in nuptial touch the sea;
There's chirp and song and wings a-rush—
To mate and nest is ecstacy.

Man too rejuvenescence feels—
An urgent impulse in his song;
Finds more of pleasure—joy reveals—
When this sweet madness comes along.

STAR TOKEN

Love, 'tis hard to go away,
Duty calls, I must obey;
But this token we may hold,
That our love may not grow cold;
When you star comes into view,
Keep this thought, I love but you.

We may parting bravely bear
If this confidence we share;
Though beyond some mountain height,
Distance keeps me from your sight,
Still when comes that star to view,
Keep this thought—I love but you.

Life's uncertainties you fear,
I fear naught when you are near.
Should I die upon the main,
Or in battle front be slain,
When you star comes into view,
Know I died still loving you.

TOLSTOY'S REGRET

"Spoke amiss to Ozeroff,"
Wrote the Count, the lov'd Lyoff,
When reflection's voice he heard—
Wished he could recall the word.

Oh, the hearts that ache to-day!
Words like swords may wound and slay;
Seems they're worse these times than others,
Though Christ said all men are brothers.

This be then our high resolve,
While time may for us revolve:
Ne'er by word or deed or scoff
Speak amiss to Ozeroff.

INTOLERANCE OF THE SEA

Across the waste, along the tide-washed vasts,
Where Ocean oft her unclean refuse casts;
Where froth and spittle from her raging greed
Bedeck the scene and noisome vapors breed;
Where birds of carrion cast their lot,
And sea-kelp rots and sea-craft moan forgot—
The wrecks that once for freedom dared to cope
And bore the flag of happiness and hope—
I thoughtful walked along the dreary miles
(I long since learned that earth is not all smiles),
That I might plumb and sense the inner mood
Which could lay waste so much with naught of good.

I watched the tide spread o'er the wide expanse,
And this conclusion came with its advance:
The Ocean has of this vast waste no need,
She only takes to satisfy her greed;
Her share of earth is not enough to throne,
She would all other higher parts pull down
To her own level if power were but given,
And taint with lethal mists e'en turquoise heaven;
Yet such her mien and such her aspect bold,
Since first her blighting waves she shoreward rolled,
That man has always taken it for granted
That she must have whatever thing she wanted.

Always? Not so; e'en as I walked along,
I saw where men had built a barrier strong
To balk the sea, and built a city tall,
Secure at last within that sturdy wall;
Lived happily with freedom's voice and cheer
Until the sea began that wall to tear—

Worked stealthily, removing stone by stone,
Until at last the fatal work was done;
Then came the fall which weeping heaven feared,
That splendid city 'neath Ocean disappeared;
And, all was lost! No, no, not all went down,
Man's courage still immortal no sea could drown.

Through hardship, blood and toil of many years,
The misery of hope deferred, of heartache and of tears,
The new wall stands, this time on newer ground,
A newer city too is built and splendors new are found;
Once more the city joys; once more is blind
To peril, for e'en now she's undermined;
Her constant foe has found the wall's weak spot,
Nor will the city heed, her former fate forgot;
She laughs at warning and says some salt sea spray
Or e'en some waves would help on bathing day;
Thus is she doomed to fall just as before;
Thus wins the sea until men build once more.

THE LIVING MAY NOT BE LIVING
THE DEAD MAY NOT BE DEAD

The old man sighed, his hair was gray and thin,
Yet with firm voice this story told to me:
"When we were wed—that's where I'd best begin—
All said it was a love-match verily;
None were more truly mated in all the country round,
None more by Heaven favored where'er they might be found.

The truth of this, Time proved in ample measure.
Our happiness increased when children came—
A pair of them enhancing every pleasure,
Winsome and sturdy, a credit to our name.
And thus we proudly lived year after happy year,
The children's play and prattle adding daily to our cheer.

Then came the time the mother went away,
A voyage of some weeks, then to return
To our wee Paradise always to stay,
Nor more to leave us lone for her to yearn;
But e're she went away, she had our tintypes taken,
That parted, we might not seem utterly forsaken.

And then she sailed!" The old man wiped a tear.
"Ah, that was a sad day when her ship sailed;
But she was brave and stilled our every fear,
Though had we known, our hearts had surely quailed,
For 'twas her own good ship was wrecked and all were drowned,
Save but a few, herself on a strange shore was found.

When she revived, the natives were most kind,
But as a friendly prisoner she was kept;
She hoped for passing ship, but no escape could find,
Though hoping still, tears fell oft when she slept.

But from the wreck, she'd saved our tintypes in her dress,
To these she prayed each night, her penates in distress.

Intolerable days became remorseless years,
With naught but toil her loneliness to ease
And the small picture shrine to feel her tears,
And think of loved ones; these did some appease;
While we—through all those cruel years our hearts would burn
Whene'er we thought of her and that she'd still return.

The years ran on, decade after decade;
The children, grown, had married and were gone;
Alone I worshipped her, her memory would not fade,
But stayed as fresh as each returning dawn;
Then, by some miracle of chance, her letter reached a fort,
An English ship sent off a boat, took her to her home port.

I saw her coming up the winding walk,
A mendicant, so wrinkled, faded, old!
She looked me over hard before she'd talk:
'I am your wife, if rightly I've been told,
Though you are most too aged, must have been your son,
For thirty years have passed since I his features looked upon.'

I felt a shock, but did not tell her so;
For thirty years sums up a woman's life,
The rest is mere existence; she would know
About the children; each had a husband, wife,
I said, and brought them home; but them she did not know,
Nor could they call her mother as in the long ago.

Those cruel years! She looked at us again,
A stranger 'mongst the strange, yet of her kin;
Emotion shook her as of some inward pain;
Then glimpsed the tintype, put it her bosom in;
'I will not stay, I'd rather with your memories live
Than with you, flesh and blood, and all that you can give.'

And I—I could not bid her stay,
Now that she had become a memory
With a dear sister, dead long years away,
When Death and Change seemed cruel hard to me;
For now, my friend, I know the living may be dead,
The dead, not dead, a living luster round us shed.

ON TAMALPAIS

On Tamalpais the summer evening's breeze
  Blows soft and cool, sweet-odored of the brine—
Rare-spiced with cedrine fragrance of the trees;
The heated hills rejoice and down the banner'd dome,
The steeds of Phaeton's swift car dip in the foam,
  And drink of fair Pacific's blood-red wine.

Soft robed the shades of twilight's purpled hour,
  Advance their hosts with silent majesty;
Unfurl their pennants, speed their mystic power,
Till the last flaming battlements of day
Red-throated yield and own triumphant sway
  Mid the soft sobbing of the night-bound sea.

Now all is hush'd save the faint-fluted tones
  Of wild fowl honking home from sedgy strand;
The tired earth, hot-brow'd, allegience owns
To Stygian night; the vast infinitude
Primordial rests in peaceful mood,
  Full trusting in Omniscience' guiding hand.

THEODORE

At Oyster Bay they laid him,
That heart of meteor fires;
And simple rites they paid him
To heed his last desires.
There his first rest he's taking,
This soul so gentle, strong,
Until the new awaking,
This fighter of the wrong.

To Oyster Bay the nations
Come with their meeds of praise;
They vie in approbations,
And paeans to him raise.
They laud him as a great man,
Like Caesar was of old,
An author, warrior, statesman,
With courage ever bold.

These claims are true we doubt not,
But we, all claims above,
Just loved him 'cause he fought not
Without a heart of love—
Of honor and true loyalty—
By these his soul was fired;
They marked him of earth's royalty,
As one by Heaven inspired.

The nations may bequeath him
A fame the world calls great;
But we, we will just wreath him
For those finer things of state;
And love of home and laughter,
For clean, refining song;
Oh! we'll miss him ever after,
This fighter of the wrong.

Theodore Roosevelt, twenty-sixth President of the United States; born Nov. 27, 1858; died Jan. 6, 1921.

THE CALL OF THE ROAD

Why, man, you surely have a heart,
That's big and kind as any king's;
This ham and eggs and custard tart,
And coffee, cream and other things—
Say, this is great as great, by Jings!

First time in weeks that I've been warm,
Or had real vittles such as these;
I clean forget the chilling storm—
The rheumatiz has left my knees,
And I could go to sleep with ease.

More coffee? Well, yes, I don't care,
Such feed would most excuse delays;
What say? Want me to stay right here?
You've work and food for all my days?
Ah, no! Ill luck's for him who stays.

There is a call, when once you've heard,
To other calls dulls every sense;
A voice that lures you, like a bird,
From zone to zone with confidence—
Impels you on, you know not whence.

It comes to me when winds blow soft,
And in the storm that numbs the blood;
'Tis in the star-shine up aloft,
The dawn, the sunset's crimson flood,
As when the sea's in an angry mood.

'Tis in the meadows jeweled white,
In woods that piney smells impart;
'Tis in the whisperings of the night,
In dreams that through my slumbers dart,
And thrills anew my vagrant heart.

Yet oftenest it calls afar,
Beyond the blue horizon's rim;
Then swift I'm off, no steel can bar,
Nor hunger, cold, nor wearied limb,
Nor perils can the vision dim.

I've followed by far Cathay's wall;
I've trod the spicy marts of Ind;
Gazed on Teheran's spires tall,
And felt the spell Bagdad may bind
Upon the pleasure-loving mind.

Twelve times your country I have crossed;
The world around six times or more;
On every sea been tempest tossed,
And still I hear, from distant shore,
That call compelling as before.

What say? Why listen to the voice?
Not best to be a rolling stone?
Ah, sir, in this I have no choice;
Not mine to do or let alone,
But on and on from zone to zone.

Yes, I'm a transient I'm aware,
Though why 'tis thus I cannot say;
I only know I may not dare
To slight the call; perhaps some day
'Twill cease to lure me far away.

But now, each path, each winding road,
Casts o'er me its enchanting spell;
So I must leave your kind abode,
To journey whither? Who can tell?
And now goodbye, a long farewell.

EVENING ON THE RANCH

(The author begs leave to present his own version of this subject.)

Bright Phoebus lingers in the West,
Before his plunge into the main;
And o'er the landscape, vale and crest,
The shades of evening come again.

Up from the river's leafy glade,
The dairy herd plods dusty trails;
Old Brindle leads the cavalcade,
Where milkers will fill foaming pails.

O'er distant foothills comes the sound
Of bleating flocks and herder's call;
His skillful collies circle round,
Till all are safe in the corral.

Domestic fowls seek roosting place,
Dogs bark, the swine call to be fed,
And calves and colts run race on race
E'er banished to their spacious shed.

From furrowed fields the plowboys wend,
Glad that the day has reached its close;
They to their tired teams attend,
E'er "clang" the supper call-bell goes.

Goose-herders break their wheatfield tryst,
And trappers who would gophers kill;
Squirrel pois'ners too are on the list,
And those who water ditches fill.

From orchard, vineyard and the field,
Thus gathers round a motley crew;
Each's for his Homeland* but all yield,
When Cheng brings in the mutton stew.

The foreman now can find no fault,
No urge to work with lusty will;
Though most, he swears, don't earn their salt,
They here display the highest skill.

The repast o'er, some play at games,
  Some chew or smoke dread nicotine;
Some fight old battles—frightful names,
  Yet never battle have they seen.

Now, to their bunks; all earth is still,
  Save night jar's plaintive notes afar;
The orange blossoms fragrance spill,
  'Neath moon's pale beam and twinkling star.

*(i. e. Each praises his native land.)

HATE STILL ABIDES

"Why was He slain?" a comrade asked,
  As they the Cross passed by that day;
The other gazed, then made reply:
  "He said 'hate should be put away.'

If that were done all creeds would fall,
  No want of Heaven, no need of hell;
Attorneys then would surely starve,
  Our learned judges too as well.

Our laws would all be swept away,
  Ten thousand tomes in costly sheep,
Save one of plainly written rules,
  Which all men everywhere would keep.

Then Labor would not have a grouch,
  And Capital would guileless give;
Such things you know would never do,
  For troublemakers have to live.

And so they hung Him to the cross,
  His doctrine was so dangerous!
Thus we'll want Heaven, and hell is sure,
  For hate will still abide with us."

THE FIDDLER

Now comes the fiddler with his lay,
In coat of shining green,
To celebrate the harvest's close
And autumn's radiant sheen;
He plays from early morn till late
For all to hear if they but wait.

The wheat and barley have been stored,
The stubbled garth lies bare;
The harvest hands have gone away,
Birds flock through field and air;
And now the fiddler has his chance,
And fairly makes his fiddle prance.

Domestic fowls oft strut around,
And kingbirds hover near;
But still he plays his merry tune
Nor has a thought of fear;
Though it be true he's often hid,
He spreads the joys of a catydid.

And so time runs, all things must fail;
He gives no heed nor care,
That soon his tune will be played out—
No music more he'll share;
May we, like him, not lack in trust
Yet play our tune as though we must.

OMAR

Thou wert the prince of scoffers of thy time,
  Yea, of all time; none equalled, none surpassed
In slaying future hope with golden rhyme,
  Nor o'er the soul a bleaker darkness cast.

And thou with Horace didst applaud the cup,
  Didst him excel in sacrilegious praise;
Didst make it god, this bacchanalian sup,
  Though time and men have proven false thy lays.

Yet thou within didst dread the end of all,
  Didst long to live beyond time's fitful verge;
Didst wish that blossoms on thy grave might fall—
  Be not forgot when ended was thy dirge.

Thou couldst not dream the bane thou didst the race,
  When those twin fallacies thou didst uphold;—
The sodden throngs who'd live—die in disgrace,
  By making Scripture of thy quatrains bold.

I would forgive thy fault with Christian grace,
  If so't might be; but all thy monstrous wrong
Passed and to come e'en Heav'n could not efface,
  So deep the hurt of thine encrimsoned song.

But of thy wish, I may fulfill a part—
  Cast on thy grave this humble tribute mine:
Oft have I sipped as sips the thirsty hart,
  At thy clear stream and worshipped at thy shrine.

With rarest rapture, thanks to Fitz, I've quaffed,
  And quaffed again a vintage sweeter far
Than beady wine, now but a banal draft;—
  Thy song exhilerates, the themes but mar.

And if thy shade still wanders through wide space,
  Still wearied, restless, on must roam,
May Heaven's pity grant thee dwelling place,
  Where disembodied spirits are at home.

JOAQUIN MILLER

The hills I climbed that autumn day
  Lay browning in the sun;
And, as I climbed, sad thoughts were mine
  Of him whose work was done;
Who'd struggled hard yet only found
That he must mingle with the ground.

A lizard lazed beside the trail,
  The bracken drooped, I ween,
Until I reached the wooded height
  And viewed a broader scene;
And then I knew my musing wrong:
Though gone, he lives in work and song.

The eucalyptus whispered it,
  The cassia waved and bowed;
The birds from barren hills came near
  To sing his praise aloud;
For he had caused the wooded shade,
Where they could warble unafraid.

The grass had grown to wavy lengths,
  The green bay greener grew;
The squirrels chirped, the rabbits leaped,
  As though in honor due;
For he had given all he had
Of toil and song to make life glad.

He built so those with weary hearts
  Might find unbought repose;
And, when refreshed, the battle face,
  And think of—e're life's close—
The Christ who gave without a stint
To soften hearts though hard as flint.

And he had found the keenest joy
  Gemmed in Time's rounded plan:
Fought sham and wrong and selfish hate
  As God's first call to man;
Won a reward none else may know,
And lives, while dust is every foe.

Oh, struggling soul! thou, too, sail on;
  No fate nor foe can blast;
If thou but in his footsteps go,
  Reward must come at last;
For human hearts still seek the light,
And faith and love still win the right.

LONGING

Out of the night-mists a star,
  Winging through eons unsum'd;
Sweeps to deep spaces afar,
  To regions by mortals unplumb'd.

Whither, oh star in thy flight?
  Whither, oh take me with thee;
Give me to see by thy light,
  The visions my heart longs to see.

Give me a place in thy beams—
  Kinship by stellar decree;
Then the fulfillment of dreams—
  The verities waiting the free.

INDUSTRY VS. DISPLAY

The butterfly and the honey bee
  Sat on the self same flower;
"You take life far too seriously,"
The former said, "just look at me,
More fair than Sheba's queen to see,
  With all her wealth and power.

I live to make a fine display,
  For that's what life is for;
I gild my wings with morning's ray,
With rainbow colors, the sheen of May,
And thus will please the King some day,
  For labor I abhor."

The bee, too busy to reply,
  Kept steadily at work;
He searched each petal, low and high,
He gleaned the gold nor reasoned why,
But sought to glean most faithfully,
  And ne'er be known to shirk.

Then came King World with royal train,
  Reward was in his hand;
All gaudy show did he disdain,
For food he craved and, of the twain,
Gave to the bee the right to reign
  As queen of all the land.

OUR BROTHER

His mission was not fully plain,
Though he dwelt here in joy and pain;
Autocracy's smug verbiage
Had throned Him king not reason's sage;
They armed Him with a vengeful sword
With speech and anger to accord,
To reign in matters of the spirit
And all things else construed as near it;
This when of rulers who'd oppress
We'd had enough, you must confess.

Then searching in a cob-webbed nook,
I found an ancient, unused book;
And searching for some fact or other,
I learned, oh. joy! He was our brother—
Brother in toil that earns our bread,
Brother in pain of heart and head;
Brother by the foul rabble curst,
Brother to feel base slander's worst,

He felt with us the look unkind,
The stab delivered from behind;
The wrong that's done through human hate
And cries aloud to Heaven's gate;
The perfidy of kiss and deed
Himself the crushed by tyrant creed;
Yet He bore all in patient mood
To show that God still understood,
And would, in time, make light the load
Of all who faithful onward strode.

And then his mission was full plain;
Man needs a brother in toil and pain
To steady him in fortitude
To do his best with gratitude,
Though perfidy may do its worst,
Invoke e'en death with the accurst;
Brother, I take Thee to my arms,
Now, life nor death can have alarms.

HIS DEED

He told of Heaven and its joys,
  Its golden streets and peaceful rest;
So free from trouble that annoys
  Here in this life e'en at its best.

His eloquence quite charmed the ear,
  And moved the soul to nobler heights;
His silver tones themselves brought cheer—
  A benediction of delights.

'Tis years since he was laid away,
  And often I his name recall;
His sermons pass in dim array—
  A kindly deed o'ershadows all.

'Twas chilly night, I, filled with gloom,
  Could nowhere find an open door;
He had, save in his heart, no room;
  I slept upon his kitchen floor.

'Tis true fair speech may travel far,
  And often will supply a need;
But this I hold 'mong truths that are:
  What lingers longest is the deed.

A GLAD OLD WORLD

Oft when I'm straying aloft on the mountain,
Where the breeze fans the brow crooning softly and low;
Or when I am drinking at some bubbling fountain,
Where the cress and the mint and the jessamine grow;
There to my spirit this truth is unfurled;
Though men may mar it, 'tis a glad old world.

Down there below is the city's loud clatter,
Man's inhumanity rushing for gain;
Crushing the helpless and weak, 'tis no matter,
So they the high courts of Mammon attain;
Would they could see but this banner unfurled;
Though men may mar it, 'tis a glad old world.

See the abundance earth freely produces,
Plenty for all of the fat of the land;
Yet thousands must famish because of abuses
By profiteers grasping with merciless hand;
Would they could see but this truth unfurled,
Though men may mar it, 'tis a glad old world.

JACK CRACKER

They used to call him lazy Jack—
  Jack Cracker;
And said hard things behind his back,
  Jack Cracker;
Said he was shiftness and no good,
Because he never would saw wood,
Nor do hard work as they thought he should,
  Jack Cracker.

They even called him poor white trash,
  Jack Cracker;
Because he never had the cash,
  Jack Cracker;
They named him unthrift's simile,
The antonym of the busy bee—
A man who never earned his tea,
  Jack Cracker.

Meanwhile poor Jack began to fail,
  Jack Cracker;
At loss of character grew pale,
  Jack Cracker;
With friends and credit lost to view,
He thought for slander he should sue,
But was too weak the thing to do,
  Jack Cracker.

In deep despair Jack sat the while,
  Jack Cracker;
Unable now to jest or smile,
  Jack Cracker;

Life was a wretched round of care,
Of misery and rank despair,
From every angle harsh, unfair,
  Jack Cracker.

Then science came and smiled on Jack,
  Jack Cracker;
Stopped all hard talk behind his back,
  Jack Cracker;
It found Jack's body full of hooks—
A parasite not found in books,
Which was destroying strength and looks,
  Jack Cracker.

And now Jack has the pulse of hope,
  Jack Cracker;
For doctors with the hooks can cope,
  Jack Cracker;
Soon Jack can vindicate his name,
By winning at the working game,
And putting slanderers to shame,
  Jack Cracker.

STAR DUST

Nancy Campbell, Nancy Campbell, ever since I saw your face,
I have had a deep desire to come over to your place;
So I've come with some presumption and now that I am here
I cannot speak the thoughts I have, I feel a little queer;
I had the words all sifted out and set in fine array,
But now that I look in your eyes they've gone like sheep astray;
I meant that they should please you well, you'd kindly think of me,
But now my ignorance is plain, my gross stupidity;
Of this you cannot have a doubt, it is a fatal lack,
So I will say farewell to you and trace my footsteps back.

No, Henry Dean, no, Henry Dean, 'tis early yet to go,
Perhaps if you should stay awhile the words again would flow;
And I have heard that you can talk of science deep and true,
Tell why the stars shine out at night, tell why the sky is blue.
And now that they begin to peep and show their diamond light,
I'd like to know why some are dull and some are always bright.
Is it because that some are loved and some unloved have been,
And left to shine alone at night, unnoticed and unseen?
And there's yon constellation, there's nothing more would please
Than have you tell about it—about the pleiades.

Nancy Campbell, Nancy Campbell, your suggestion comes in time,
For now the words begin to come almost like flowing rhyme;
I've made a study of the stars, of them I something know,
I notice them each evening as I travel too and fro;
And some of them have lent their sheen from their high place above
To give the sparkle here to eyes just made I trow for love;
(I know a pair that have the glow—of many stars the shine,
I must not mention it I know, I'd like to call them mine;)
Ah, how the words keep rushing on, I hope they won't displease,
Could you—oh, could you love one who too loves the Pleiades?

PROGRESS

Life is progress; deep and true,
Runs the Eternal Purpose through;
Results by sturdy effort brought,
Today by newer process wrought.

Perpetual adaptation binds,
To new conditions, keenest minds;
Apparent excellencies are
Discarded with mistakes that mar.

ADVANCE is e'er the watch word high,
And ways more intricate apply;
The vision new, new power obtains,
In every process, progress reigns.

SMILE ON

When rank failure bids you grumble
And feel blue;
Or investments take a tumble
And fall through;
When constrained to fret and worry,
Hustling ever in a hurry,
Better pause amidst the flurry,
And just smile, keep smiling on.

If storm-tossed and faith is failing,
As it may;
And your friends once true are railing,
Day by day;
If you cannot meet the payment,
Don't give way to harsh inveighment,
Put on hope like a new raiment,
And just smile, keep smiling on.

Does distress bring to you grieving,
With each breath;
Health of self or loved one leaving,
As for death;
Still there's light beyond the gloaming,
Hope for weary hearts a-roaming,
If they'll keep from fretting, foaming,
And just smile, keep smiling on.

HER LOVE NOTES

The fragrant winds sigh softly
  The orange boughs among;
They bring this cheer to my waiting ear,
A whispered cadence soft and clear,
  Like the love-notes in her song.

Beneath this tree a-trysting,
  The hours like moments fled;
The words we sung, were just new sprung
To live in hearts forever young—
  Long as true hearts shall wed.

'Twas in the time of blossoms,
  Ah! I remember well;
For she would wear some petals fair
From off the tree whose fragrance rare
  Her kisses only could excel.

And then—but life is fleeting,
  Be still, oh aching heart!
The bloom she wore I saw no more
When off her precious form they bore
  Of earth to be a part.

And now where'er my roaming,
  I come when the blossoms throng,
For the fragrance here and to catch the cheer
Of the whispered cadence soft and clear,
  Like the love-notes in her song.

WASHINGTON

The years but add a brighter glow,
  Give him a truer fame,
Who struck for Liberty the blow—
  Enthroned her with acclaim;
Oh! Washington, our Washington,
  God armed thee for the fray,
In simple, stainless, robust worth,
To lift the murk of tyrant earth,
  That Freedom might have sway.

As from some barbican of time,
  His vision streamed afar;
Heard the oppressed from every clime
  Cry for an Avatar;
Oh! Washington, our Washington,
  God raised thee from the throng
To do the deed when great the need
To free from crushing tyrant's greed
  And help the weak to be strong.

At the full stroke of Aeon's knell,
  He bravely took command;
Exposed his breast to shot and shell
  Our country's chains to rend;
Oh! Washington, our Washington,
  God guided thee aright,
Kept thee unharm'd, Hephaestus charm'd,
Until the foe was whipped, disarm'd,
  And Freedom's law was might.

But oh, the heart-ache and the toil,
  The hunger and the cold!
All was endured to free the soil
  And Freedom's flag unfold;

Oh! Washington, our Washington,
Our hearts are grateful still,
Thy worthy name we now proclaim
With highest honor, noblest fame,
For working Freedom's will.

Can we, oh, can we e'er forget
The struggle and the cost!
The flag that with our blood was wet,
May it e'en now be lost?
Oh! Washington, our Washington,
God rot the traitor hand,
That seeks to mar a stripe or star,
While waves the flag where true hearts are,
Thou gavest to our land.

LEONTION

She walks—of all the girls I know,
A princess 'mongst the charming many;
Fairer than fair as maidens go,
Without a fault—or hardly any.

Of noblest traits she has full store,
That are to lovely maid befitting;
She bids me stay and talk some more,
When in the hammock we are sitting.

Modest of mien yet glad and gay,
She shows that I add to her pleasure;
Happy I'll be when comes the day,
That I may claim her for my treasure.

THEY SEE THE KING

All souls of earth seek happiness,
  But only they shall find,
Who have the burning zeal of faith,
  And an exalted mind.

Not true a cat may see the king;
  It only sits and glares;
It sees in terms of feline wants,
  In common with the bears.

They see the king who are possess'd
  Of kingly qualities;
Of courage, honor, graciousness,
  The true humanities.

So they who find true happiness,
  Have qualities of mind,
To feel the calm and peaceful glow,
  And know it when they find.

THY WORK IS THY REWARD

Wouldst know thy fate, oh gallant youth,
Thou who wouldst boost the world along?
So eager thou, so filled with zeal,
To lift mankind from woe to weal,
To its best self, its sorrows heal,
Thou may'st not see the sordid truth,
For vision of the victor's song.

Thou canst indeed help give it speed,
This world, along the lanes of toil;
But 'tis decreed no victor's song
Nor laurel shall to thee belong;
Thou'lt be forgot, the thoughtless throng
Will pass thee by, nor little heed
Who helped them from the muck and moil.

Yet halt not in thy noble quest,
Nor for reward too closely scan;
For though the world may on thee frown,—
The speed thou givest help pull thee down—
Thy work for thee will be a crown—
Will glad thy heart as of the best
Who've walked the earth—a God-like man.

AT PANAMA

(December, 1899)

At Panama, when the sun sinks low,
  And purple shadows fall amain,
A thousand phantoms come and go,
  A thousand rovers live again—
Adventurers on conquest bound,
Who once made this their stamping ground.

That pirate age again returns,
  And law is force, the sword is law;
The corsair who most cities burns
  Wins highest stakes which one may draw,
And slaughterers of friendly host,
Though honor's dead, are honored most.

A continent Fate holds in pawn,
  Great empires wait for him who'll take;
Bold buccaneers strive for a throne
  Though bloody be the path they make,
And some will win where all should lose
Who life's most precious gifts abuse.

Davila comes with sturdy band
  To found a city in the West;
Aeneas-like he views the land,
  Then builds his walls to stand the test
Of troublous times, yet naught avails
'Gainst the freebooter who assails.

Pizarro comes in stress of need,
  Monk Luque gives him wished-for aid;
The miscreant forgets the deed,
  Ingratitude's the coin repaid;
For honesty and noble worth
Seem banished from the bleeding earth.

Dread Morgan sails the Spanish Main,
  His name is cause for whispered fear,
A thousand prayers are said in vain,
  For now his ships are anchored near
And Panama lies sacked and still,
A victim of the victor's will.

Off yonder rides the Golden Hind,
Her skipper's had his dream come true;
He's plowed Balboa's sea to find
More riches than Golconda knew;
Today in Porto Bello's deep,
Drake's body is consigned to sleep.

And so they come and so they go;
Revolt and riot too have sway,
Till dawn's fair light begins to glow
And pirate visions flee away;
Cathedral bells smite on the ear,
Night's lustful prowlers disappear.

Now gaze upon the leaning walls,
The broken tower, the rutted stone,
The heritage that still recalls
That vicious age now haply gone,
When e'en the cross was made to bless
The dastard deeds of the conscienceless.

Go where the dead are sepulchered;
Outside its holy walls are thrown
The bones of those once there interred
In rotting heaps, their names unknown!
Were these defenders in the strife
Of love and home and precious life!

Fair Panama, of varied fame!
Thou'st suffered to the dregs, I ween;
Time's horiscope would still acclaim
A brighter sky than yet has been;
For Destiny knows no defeat—
Will yet enroll thee 'mong the great.

SERVICE

The rose that was so fondly cherished,
  Spread forth its bloom but for a day;
Yet ere from wintry breath it perished,
  Shed all around its fragrance sweet as May.

The sturdy oak anear the village,
  With broken boughs yet upright form;
Still fends the blasts from gentler tillage,
  Patient to breast each hurtling storm.

So each, though humble be his mission—
  Unfelt the thrill of popular acclaim;
May know the joy of glad fruition,
  In duty's meads and worthy aim.

THE LAND OF THE CONTENTED HEART

I wandered long, I searched afar,
The Land of Happiness to find;
Was it a myth of earth or star,
Just meant for flight of thought's swift car,
Not to be reached but sadly mar
Such joys as bless poor humankind?

No, I have found this Paradise,
Though not engrossed on star-blazed chart;
Within the reach of all it lies,
By homely hearth, neath changing skies,
And labeled by the good and wise,
The Land of the Contented Heart.

This land is rich in gifts not gold,
Not ermine robes nor gems of art;
But fabrics rarely bought or sold,
In friends whose worth cannot be told,
In verdant meadows, mountains bold—
This Land of the Contented Heart.

Its many charms I find so rare,
That I shall never more depart;
It gives of health a goodly share,
Food, raiment, shelter and to spare,
The love of those most dear and fair—
This Land of the Contented Heart.

It grants success in fair degree—
For God helps those who do their part—
Books and a garden fair to see;
The dreaded things pass harmlessly;
Holds joys untasted still for me—
This Land of the Contented Heart.

DUTY—TRUST—HONOR

Sentinel, thy duty do
  Though unhonored be thy lot;
Thine to guard by valor true
  Though the deed be soon forgot.

Sentinel, thy trust fulfill
  Though forgotten at thy post;
Thine the noblest virtue still
  Faith to keep with sleeping host.

Sentinel, no peril shun,
  Foes can but the body kill;
Honor lost is ne'er rewon—
  Lives for aye dishonor still.

MY DOG

I never knew from whence he came,
That homely little dog of mine;
I only know that sick and lame,
Without a friend, without a name,
Or anything to give him fame,
I found him most too weak to whine.

He saw me pause, then tried his best,
To crawl up to me where I stood;
One effort and he had to rest,
His wounds hurt so; one on his breast,
Was bleeding still like all possess'd,
And oh, how much he needed food.

Then as I saw him suffer, oh!
It made my angry passions rise;
I wanted but the chance to show
The human wretch by blow on blow,
Just what it meant to suffer so—
To treat God's creatures in this wise.

I picked him up with tender care,
And took him gently home with me;
I dressed his wounds, gave him a share
Of food and warmth and kindness where
Before he only had for fare
The deepest kind of cruelty.

When he got well a truer friend,
Man never had upon this earth;
His gratitude was without end,
He'd fetch for me and at command,
Attack a foe, my home defend,
Proud for the chance to be of worth.

Yes, he's as homely as a rag,
His tail is kinked and homely too;
But I would rather trust its wag,
Than all the boasts of men who brag,
Of friendship, country and the flag,
But never prove their friendship true.

NIGHT'S MYSTERY

I wander oft, companion of the night,
Along the trails that lead to mountain height;
By shrouded trees or 'neath the open sky
To hear the whisperings of night's mystery.

The varied twinklings of the friendly stars,
Far from the noisy street or aught that mars;
The moonbeams with their tender light serene
Send happy thoughts as of close friends between.

And this the mystery, the message plain,
As I return to Orange Bower again:
Too much of sun as well as Heaven's pure light
Must filtered be to bear by earth-born wight.

FAIR PLAY

"You must capture Philoctetes,"
Says the crafty Ulysses;
"Use the wiliest deception,
And his might you'll match with ease."

Then obeys Neoptolemus,
To his prince a faithful youth;
Feigns sincerity of friendship—
Wins success at cost of truth.

But above the joy of conquest,
Speaks an inner monitor;
Shows the baseness of his method—
Ways that honest men abhor.

Then repents he of his action,
Bow and arrows he returns;
And his pride to take the exile
Back to Troy in triumph, spurns.

Ulysses, the prince, derides him,
But the brave youth will not quail;
"I would rather, acting nobly,
Fail than basely to prevail."

ODE TO MOTHERHOOD

Hathor, since I thy form observed
On pillared stone where it was carved,
That all might of thy prowess learn—
Obedient might thy favor earn—
My clarion sounds its highest praise
For those who lived in those far days,
Who worshiped thee among the good,
Thou Goddess of fair Motherhood!

Thou wert the first to have the grace
To honor mothers of the race;
To show all else of little worth
Unless the mothers gave us birth;
Though dynasties have come and gone,
Full fifty centuries were thine own;
And though thou art now near forgot,
The realm of motherhood is not.

So near forgot yet lingering
Are praiseful words they used to sing;
"The Lady of the Turquoise" thou,
A title that would charm e'en now;
How often bowed the wistful maid!
How many a mother sought thy aid,
As down the centuries there ran
The multiplying race of man!

Far greater wert than Egypt's queen
In splendor's robe of purple sheen,
And fascinating gaze that won
World-conquering Caesar for her own;
Or Bilkis gracing Sheba's crown
And gifts which spread her high renown,
When she proved Israel's king a sage—
Wrote high her name on Time's own page.

For what are rank and high renown,
The royal robe or jeweled crown,
The gifts of wealth or Beauty's face
Compared with bearers of the race!
Though Wisdom's Lamp illume the height
Till all the world might see the light,
How feeble still compared with this:
A mother's love, a mother's kiss!

Old goddesses have had their day,
A better kind are here to stay;
I see them daily with delight—
The mothers with a crown of light;
This world indeed would be quite drear,
If they should fail to bless and cheer;
And this I say, each one I see,
"She's goddess quite enough for me."

HE SMILED GOOD-MORNING

He smiled "Good-morning" as the day
  Rushed on with noisy tread;
And in my heart there sprang a lay
That sang through toil and business fray
And eased the harshness of the way
  Till all the hours had sped.

I felt the cheer of lark's glad note
  Nor paused to reason why;
No time for thought, near or remote,
For puff and blow from noisy throat
Of rushing train and speeding boat,
  As they my work brought nigh.

And then began the daily grind
  As all days of the year;
The pouch of mail—its tone was kind,
The grouch, it seemed, had changed his mind,
Though men were frank, they were refined
  And wrote with quiet cheer.

At eve, I sat in easy chair
  And said: This day was fine;
It was the wheat that waved so fair,
Or glint of tree-tops high in air,
Or sky close bending azure rare,
  That eased the burdens mine.

But still sang on some pleasant thought,
  Some mem'ry would review;
Was it some peal of anthem caught,
Some deed well done, some business wrought,
Ah, no; it was what came unbought;
  Friend, 'twas that smile from you.

SELF'S DOMAIN

The seer said "myself am hell,"
A truth to bear in mind;
Self is the only prison cell,
That can forever bind.

Though time and fate and custom frown,
And foes would thwart the goal;
Fair Freedom's jewel will him crown,
Who's captain of his soul.

There are no thrones in earth or space,
Where gods Olympian reign;
But he may win with worthy grace,
Who's king of self's domain.

RETURN, RETURN

I would not ask you to return
As though the wish were wholly mine;
For all around there's call and yearn
For something that was wholly thine.

A presence that would glad the birds,
Whose songs are mournful all the day;
The river, too, too dull for words,
Again would sing its roundelay.

The orange trees' neath which we walked,
Which showered fragrance sweetly through,
While we of all life's beauty talked,
Are sadly waiting too for you.

The garden paths lie strangely still,
The latch-string waits your magic hand,
Where love came tripping at your will
And lived in time's enchanted land.

A silence falls at evening's close,
The sun sinks lonely o'er the range;
The moon's pale beam no friendship shows
The stars dim-smoulder at the change.

The poppies fade upon the hill,
The heliotrope sheds no perfume;
The ringdoves sigh nor coo nor bill
And wander aimless from their home.

For these and all you must return,
To liven them with pleasure's glow;
They must no longer pine and yearn
Nor hunger for your presence so.

Dull care will then no more intrude
When your form enters at the door;
You'll smile away this solitude
And my dead heart will live once more.

LOVERS

I saw the sea from the mountain,
I saw her from a near hill;
She had the charm of color,
She had the silence of intimacy,
She had the fascination of motion,
And she beckoned to me.

She beckoned to me as a lover;
Come hither, come hither, light-hearted,
Come hither son of perfection,
Come hither cousin Proteus,
And join me in revelry.

I went down to her boudoir,
Where she rarely allows intrusion;
But her salutation frightened me,
It was so effusive, boisterous,
I was scarce equal to it.

I grew bolder, (I hate a laggard);
She told me her secrets—
The ways of her endearments,
The fervor of her love,
The strength of her affection,
And I reciprocated.

She threw her white arms around me,
She embraced me rapturously,
She anointed me with her green beauty;
On her bosom she caressed me,
Tossing and swaying with delight—
I knew I had found my great Love.

Now I can scarcely endure separation—
All my thoughts are fixed on her;
When away, I hasten to return,
All my dreams are dreams of her;
I am a lover of the sea,
Of the effusive, boisterous, sea.

BY THE FEATHER

River of destiny, flowing majestic'ly,
Placidly onward through mountain and plain;
Oh, how the heart of me clings to the heart of thee,
Trav'lers afar, we return not again.

I would know this of thee: What is the mystery
Of this strange essence by man yclept life;
In the mad hum of it, what is the sum of it,
Joys frought with struggle, its peace mar'd by strife?

"This the amenity brings me serenity,
Joys of performance unheeded of man;
Not for the sound of it, do I my round of it,
But for my part in the Omniscient Plan."

WHAT MOUNTAINS TELL

I love the grave old mountains,
  Though grim their forms appear;
And none would own their rocks so brown,
  So frowning, bleak and bare.

With zest I climb their pathways,
  Or rest upon their crown;
For there aloft the winds blow soft,
  Far from the heated town.

O'er thoughtful contemplation,
  They cast a glamour'd spell;
Of aeons old of tales untold,
  Of heat sans parallel.

How Vulcan's Titan smithy
  Forged out their rugged peaks;
What hammers rang, what anvils sang,
  The wondrous work bespeaks.

And now in aged grandure,
  They stand earth's bulwarks strong;
And year by year unmoved they hear
  The storm-king's siren song.

I muse till thoughts most wistful
  Well up and fill my soul;
For tell who can both mount and man
  Are part of the Great Whole.

And so I love the mountains,
  For this to me they tell:
Whate'er our forms we'll fear no storms,
  For all is ordered well.

INSPIRED TO DUTY

To all accustomed toil and care
Give pause that we, these mounds beside,
May scatter flow'rs, o'er each a share,
Who've passed beyond life's fitful tide.

This tribute to their dust we give—
God keeps his own—they need it not;
But that the fragrance, while we live,
Of their dear mem'ries be not forgot.

Since last this loving rite we paid,
New thousands have death's vantage gained;
While we, in earth's dim-lighted shade,
Are from the Greater Light restrained.

The earth lies numbed from war's dread blight,
Yet leaves this rose above the mold:
Men's souls are cleansed by righteous fight
Of all their dross to shining gold.

These are not buried in the earth,
Within the Nation's heart they lie;
Enshrined as of immortal birth
In valor's deeds that cannot die.

They rest with those of Sixty-One,
Of Seventy-Six and Twelve secure;
Our brave and true, their warfare done,
That Freedom might alway endure.

From obscure region they have moved
To hist'ry's shrine; there, praiseful meeds,
Engraved, will bless them we so loved
Long as Time's scroll marks worthy deeds.

How precious thus, their dust a-near,
To catch a glimpse of fulfilled dream!
To mingle speech of them so dear
Who gave life's purpose a holier gleam!

Now to all memories sacred here,
These tributes of our love we spread;
And consecrate the coming year,
Inspired to duty by our dead.

AT YOSEMITE

Amidst the dreams of matter and of space,
I've traveled far along the varied trails
Of God's own footstool and His universe;
Have heard His deep yet gentle whisperings
Appealingly in many a sun-bright spot,
Where songbirds trilled amidst the orange breath
Of groves with Hesper's fruit full laden
And the grape and fig gave pleasing comfort.

And on the waving hills, where the heliotrope
Spread sacred incense and the poppy's bloom
Beamed glad-eyed beauty while the canon thrush,
With swelling throat and bursting joy,
Poured out her notes in praiseful melody;
The kiss of Heav'n was on the lips of earth
And made it sweet to worship and rejoice
In all His goodness with high ecstasy.

Once more, with pilgrim staff and shoon,
My feet have reached a sacred shrine—
Sacred because the Maker of great worlds
Here left a bit of planet quite unsmoothed

That men might glimpse His majesty and power,
Where cliff mounts cliff until the eye
In terror seeks the earth in deep humility;
All within that is reverent and profound
Mounts dominant in wonder and amaze.
Again 'tis meet to worship and exult,

Now, not with ecstacy, but that solemn joy
Which plumbs the soul and stirs the crypts of being;
Here you may sense the pulse of the Almighty
And hear articulate His undertones,
E'en midst a rabble of unthinking wights
Babbling of wheels and gears and the demon Speed,
Or some profaner of the Throb called Life,
And see naught else in all the universe.

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